

# Stamp Out Hunger Donor Drive raising money locally for food banks

**T**he COVID-19 pandemic hasn't stopped us from carrying the mail, though it did force a change in how we serve our communities, including the postponement of the annual Letter Carriers' Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive that was scheduled for May.

For the past 27 years, letter carriers have collected bags of food donated by postal customers on the second Saturday in May, filling local food pantries. With the pandemic forcing us to suspend this year's Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive, the largest single-day food collection in the nation, food banks faced major shortages. Many food banks declined all food donations from individuals for safety reasons. Meanwhile, the economic crisis caused by the pandemic sent demand for food into overdrive, with some pantries reporting that the number of families requesting food had increased threefold.

Instead of giving up, letter carriers found new ways to help. The pandemic wasn't going to stop us from helping those in need. NALC responded to the food drive postponement by setting up tools for the public to help fill the shelves of local food pantries in a new way—with online donations through the Stamp Out Hunger Donor Drive—along with asking branches to make direct donations. NALC rolled out the donor drive in June.

"As letter carriers deliver in every neighborhood in the country six and seven days a week, we see the need and we cannot wait while food banks struggle, demand grows and people remain hungry," NALC President Fredric Rolando said.

As with the traditional Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive, proceeds from the donor drive stay in the communities

of the donors. Any resident, whether in a big city or suburb, a small town or rural area, can donate funds for a local food pantry to purchase food and replenish its stocks so that local families can put food on their tables.

"Each May, NALC's food drive has filled a gap between holiday food donations and the end of free meals in school during summer break," Rolando said. "This year, the economic crisis and the disruption in food donations have made our support even more important. With the right effort, letter carriers could extend this online food drive to help fulfill the needs of local food banks for many months to come."

NALC Headquarters is providing its members, as well as the general public, with an easy way to participate. By visiting [nalc.org/food](http://nalc.org/food), donors can find a food bank in their area to support with an online donation. The site links directly to donation pages on each food bank's website. The same list also provides branches with a convenient means of informing donors in their area about how to locate and donate online to their local food banks.

To kick off the campaign, NALC Headquarters pledged to match any donations that branches made directly to the donor drive. By the end of August, branches had donated a total of \$185,800, an amount that was matched by NALC Headquarters. The



total donated by everyone will be announced in a future issue of *The Postal Record*.

"The generous donations by branches give the donor drive effort an immediate boost while branches ramp up their efforts to bring in donations from local citizens and businesses," Rolando said.

New Jersey Merged Branch 38 responded to the urgent need for food donations the quickest way it could.

"We put it before the membership whether we could donate to the food banks in our branch [area]," Branch 38 President **Michael O'Neill** said. With 32 food banks in the area, the branch's donation of \$200 to each pantry, matched dollar for dollar by NALC Headquarters, helped a large number of hungry families. "We received great feedback from the food banks," O'Neill said.

Branch 38 is publicizing the donor drive on social media and in its newsletter, as it does each year for the May

food drive. “We’re pushing it as much as we can,” O’Neill said. “Every chance we get, we mention it.”

The branch also sends a letter each year to the mayors of 65 towns in its area asking for support for the regular food drive, so it sent the same letter this year to publicize the donor drive.

Los Angeles Branch 24 responded to the immediate need with a donation from the branch—it gave \$12,000, matched by NALC Headquarters, to support efforts by Labor Community Services (LCS), a non-profit partner of the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor, to provide food to the hungry.

“There are so many people not working in L.A.,” Branch President **Larry Brown** said. “We couldn’t just not do

something.” Brown also is president of the LCS board.

“You’ve got a big variety of people in need coming through those food lines,” he said. “So many don’t have anything.”

Thanks to the support of donors like Branch 24, “we have had 50 food distributions since March 15,” Labor Community Services Executive Director Armando Olivas said. “We feed thousands and thousands of people [a year].” The food distribution events LCS has held during the pandemic showed how serious the hunger problem has become in Los Angeles—for some, the lines of cars full of people waiting for food stretched for miles.

Springfield, IL Branch 80 gave \$20,000, matched by NALC, to several

area food banks, Branch President **Jon Calloway** said. “Obviously, the food drive is a central part of how we serve the community,” he said. Now, the branch is working to encourage its members, their families and the communities they serve to donate through the donor drive.

“This year, America’s food pantries are burning the candle from both ends because donations are down while requests for food from hungry families is up,” Rolando said. “They need our support more than ever, and letter carriers are stepping up, as they have for 27 years.”

Look for more information about the donor drive in future issues of *The Postal Record*. **PR**

## Carriers encouraged to give through CFC

**T**he COVID-19 pandemic, and the economic crisis it caused, have prompted many Americans to pitch in to help charities of all types. As federal employees, letter carriers have a convenient way to give a little at a time to our favorite causes through the world’s largest annual workplace giving program, the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC).

CFC participants make charitable donations via deductions from their paychecks. Letter carriers may sign up during the CFC Open Season, from Sept. 21, 2020, through Jan. 15, 2021, to donate next year through CFC.

Pledges made during the campaign season support eligible non-profit organizations chosen by the donor. Carriers can select the groups they want to support from a list of thousands of eligible charities, and an amount of their choosing will be deducted from

their paychecks each pay period and automatically sent to their selected charities.

“Letter carriers and other federal employees who donate by participating in the CFC through paycheck deduction provide steady, predictable income for the charities they support,” NALC President Fredric Rolando said.

All active letter carriers can participate in the CFC through payroll deduction. The easiest way to sign up is through the CFC Donor Pledging System at [cfcgiving.opm.gov](http://cfcgiving.opm.gov). Retired letter carriers may make a one-time or recurring e-check or credit card contribution to the CFC. These one-time and recurring gifts also can be made through the CFC Donor Pledging System.

In a letter, Rolando asked NALC members to contribute through the CFC in addition to the other ways they support the community.

“The pandemic and the economic crisis that came with it have strained the resources of many charitable groups, making your support so much more important,” Rolando wrote. “I am asking for your help in ensuring that this year’s campaign is successful, and I invite you to join me in supporting the Combined Federal Campaign by making a pledge or donation to the charities of your choice.”

NALC is directly involved in three charities eligible for support through the CFC:

The **Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA)** is NALC’s only official charity. It is the world’s leading non-profit health organization sponsoring research into the causes of, and effective treatments for, neuromuscular diseases. MDA research grants support about 150 research projects worldwide, as well as camps and

activities for children who have one of these diseases. For more information, go to [mdausa.org](http://mdausa.org).

The **Postal Employees' Relief Fund (PERF)** provides financial support to active and retired postal employees whose primary residence has been completely destroyed or left uninhabitable by a major natural disaster or an isolated house fire. The charity is run by the four postal employee unions and three management organizations, whose members support PERF through voluntary donations. Information and applications for PERF assistance can be found at [postalrelief.com](http://postalrelief.com).

**United Way Worldwide** is the leadership and support organization for the network of nearly 1,800 community-based United Way organizations in 40 countries and territories. United Way focuses on creating community-based and community-led solutions that provide the foundation for a good quality of life: education, financial stability and health. For more information, go to [unitedway.org](http://unitedway.org). **PR**



## National Association of Letter Carriers

**Fredric V. Rolando**  
President

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Each year, letter carriers, along with other postal and federal employees, have the opportunity to donate to charities through the Combined Federal Campaign. This year, the pandemic and the economic crisis that came with it have strained the resources of many charitable groups, making your support so much more important. I am asking for your help in ensuring that this year's campaign is successful, and I invite you to join me in supporting the Combined Federal Campaign by making a pledge or donation to the charities of your choice.

Each day, within the communities where we live and deliver the mail, many of us encounter people who are enduring real-life problems, especially this year. Throughout the year, we help our communities in a number of ways while looking after those who are vulnerable. In addition to what we do each day in the neighborhoods we serve, the Combined Federal Campaign gives us an easy way to contribute money through payroll deductions to the charities we care about.

The NALC is directly involved in three such charities: the Postal Employees' Relief Fund (PERF), the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA)—NALC's official charity—and the United Way.

I know that the times we live in continue to challenge us on many fronts. But I also know that when we take action to make a difference and to merge our individual efforts, we improve lives and create better communities.

Thank you for your daily work delivering the mail, and thank you in advance for ensuring that this year's Combined Federal Campaign is successful.

Sincerely and fraternally,

**Fredric V. Rolando**  
President

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## November magazine to honor Veterans Group members

**I**n 2015, NALC announced the creation of the NALC Veterans Group to acknowledge and inform the military veterans who served their country and continue to do so by trading their military uniforms for letter carrier uniforms. Veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces comprise almost a quarter of the NALC membership.

The Veterans Group was designed to provide NALC members who are military veterans with access to the information and tools specific to veterans' rights and benefits within the U.S. Postal Service, as well as a sense of camaraderie.

Since that 2015 launch, thousands of members have signed up to be part of the group and received the special pin showing their status.

In the next issue of *The Postal Record*, to celebrate Veterans Day—our national holiday recognizing the service of veterans—NALC will publish the names of all of these Veterans Group members.

Any veteran who wishes to be included, but who has not yet joined the group, can take action now and join at [nalc.org/veterans](http://nalc.org/veterans). If you are a member of the group and do not wish to have your name listed, please email your request to [veteransgroup@nalc.org](mailto:veteransgroup@nalc.org). **PR**

